

Boxes were stacked everywhere! Kevin looked around the living room of his new house. He wondered which box contained his baseball glove. Mother had carefully labeled each box. He saw "china," "kitchen utensils," "kitchen curtains," and so on, but he didn't see anything with his name on it.

Dad was directing the moving men, telling them where to place furniture and boxes, while Mother was unpacking dishes in the new kitchen. "May I help you, Mother?" asked Kevin. Mother said, "No, thank you," because she was afraid Kevin would drop something and break it. Kevin wandered around the unfamiliar, empty house. His old house had been smaller, with only one story, but this house was three stories high when you counted the basement. Kevin didn't even want to venture down to the basement.

Upstairs, Dad was moving the larger crates that contained the bedroom furniture. "Let me give you a hand, Dad," Kevin said loudly over the noise of the movers. "No, thanks anyway, son. I don't want you to hurt your back. Your mother would kill me."

Kevin was having a terrible day, perhaps the most horrible, yucky day he had ever had, except when that girl had tried to kiss him on the playground when he was in the third grade. He ambled outside and peered down the street to see whether he could spot anything of interest. Nope, nothing that way. Then he glanced next door. He spied a baseball bat and his hopes soared!

Maybe there was a boy his age living next door and they could play baseball together, and maybe he went to the new school that Kevin would be attending and he could show Kevin around. He probably liked racecars and would be very impressed with Kevin's

collection of miniature sports cars. Kevin became so excited about having this new friend that he rushed inside the house to tell Mother and Dad. "Wonderful!" they said. "Go next door and introduce yourself."

Kevin raced back down the steps and he spied a girl swinging the baseball bat. "Oh no!" he cried. "It's a girl!" The girl turned toward him. "I'm sorry," said Kevin. "I thought you were a boy with whom I could play baseball." "Do you think I can't play? Well, try to hit one of my pitches!" For several minutes, Kevin tried to slam the balls that she threw him but he could not. He realized that this girl was going to be a fun neighbor.

"Hey, will you be going to Springs School? Maybe you could show me around," said Kevin. "Sure," said his new friend.

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